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GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Voluntary Public

Date: 5/30/2012

GAIN Report Number: RS1236

Russian Federation

Post: Moscow

Fishery Agency to Fall Under Control of the Ministry of Agriculture

Report Categories:

Agriculture in the News

Fishery Products

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Report Highlights:

A Presidential Executive Order (Ukaz) "On the Structure of Federal Executive Bodies," was issued on May 21, 2012, and includes placing the Federal Fishery Agency under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture. Since 2008, this agency has been independent, and this change is causing apprehension and concern within the fishery industry.

General Information:**New Government Structure:**

The Presidential Executive Order (Ukaz) of May 21, 2012 “On the Structure of Federal Executive Bodies” includes some changes in the structure of the Federal Government concerning agriculture, fisheries and forestry. According to this Order the Federal Fishery Agency will now be subordinated to the Ministry of Agriculture. Article 12 of the Order grants the Ministry of Agriculture the right to set and implement state policies and legal regulations pertaining to fishery, as well as jurisdiction over production activities on fishing vessels, protection and the rational use and reproduction of water biological resources.

Industry Response:

This new structural change has aroused concern among the fishery industry, and many are apprehensive about how this will affect the sector’s development. According to media reports, a number of Fishery associations and large fishery producers have signed a letter to the Chairman of the Government where they expressed clear displeasure with the decision to move the Fishery Agency back under the authority of the Ministry of Agriculture. The letter stated that throughout the last 20 years, the Fishery Agency has been restructured 15 times. Moreover, the agency has been part of the Agricultural Ministry four times, during which time the sector experienced serious problems. Reportedly, the letter calls on the government to not only revoke its recent order and preserve the independent status for the Fishery Agency, but also “to create an executive body with a higher functional level than that of the agency.” The letter claims that President Putin supported this decision at the Russian Fishermen Congress in February 2012.

The Chairman of Far Eastern Fishery Union Dmitriy Dremluyuga believes that during the last four years the sector has demonstrated positive results and “hiding it” under the Ministry of Agriculture would be a mistake that the sector has already experienced. He argues that this change would likely be a step back for the industry’s development.

Background:

Prior to April 2004, fisheries were under the aegis of the State Fisheries Committee, whose chairman was subordinate to the prime minister. Upon restructuring, between April 2004 and November 2007 the Federal Agency for Fisheries was moved under the auspice of the Ministry of Agriculture. In November 2007 the State Committee for Fisheries was reestablished by decree and then since May 2008, per Presidential Executive Order No. 863, the Russian Fishery Agency has acted an independent agency, reporting directly to the government.

